



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Rick Perry

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Gov. Perry: SB 14 Takes a Major Step in Securing the Integrity of the Electoral Process
Signs legislation requiring voters to present photo ID at polling places

AUSTIN – Gov. Rick Perry today ceremonially signed Senate Bill 14, which requires voters to present photo identification at a polling place. The governor was joined by Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst, House Speaker Joe Straus, Sen. Troy Fraser and Rep. Patricia Harless for the signing ceremony.

"The right to vote is simply too important for us to take the act of voting lightly," Gov. Perry said. "Today with the signing of this bill, we take a major step forward in securing the integrity of the ballot box and protecting the most cherished right we enjoy as citizens."

SB 14 requires a voter to show as a valid form of photo ID either a driver's license, Department of Public Safety issued photo personal identification card, U.S. military ID card, U.S. citizenship certificate that contains a photograph, U.S. passport or Texas concealed handgun license. The bill creates a free election identification certificate with a photograph issued by DPS for registered voters who need a photo ID. The bill also increases the penalty for voting illegally to a second degree felony, and increases attempted illegal voting to a state jail felony.

"Texas has taken a stand for free and fair elections by making Voter ID the law of the land," Lt. Gov. Dewhurst said. "We have a responsibility to protect and defend the Constitution, as well as the laws of our state and nation, and I'm proud to stand with Gov. Perry, members of the Texas Legislature and my fellow Texans to uphold the sanctity of our most fundamental democratic principle: one person, one vote."

SPEAKER QUOTE

Voters who fail to show a photo ID at the polling place may cast a provisional ballot, which is only counted if they appear at the county voter registrar's office within six days after Election Day with the appropriate photo identification.

"Photo ID is simply putting into practice the intent of the current law – that the person who shows up at the polls is who he or she claims to be," Sen. Fraser said. "Voter impersonation is a serious crime, but without a photo ID requirement we can never have confidence in our system of voting."

"We must do all we can to guarantee our elections are conducted fairly and without fraud," Rep. Harless said. "This bill takes a significant step to ensure the integrity of the ballot box by providing a means to deter and detect in-person voter fraud."

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Exemptions to the photo ID requirement are available to people who have a religious objection to being photographed, and disabled individuals who provide written documentation from the Social Security Administration or Department of Veterans Affairs confirming their disability and a statement that they do not have any form of photo identification. A disabled voter would then be issued a registration certificate to show in order to vote.

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